

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

A. Explanation Of Amendments

Claims 1-13 were pending. By this paper, claims 1, 3 and 5-12 have been amended as described below, claim 4 has been cancelled and new claims 14-20 have been added.

Claims 1, 3, 6-12 have been amended to recite “protuberances” instead of “arrangements.” The phrase “in particular” has been deleted from claim 1. Language reciting preferred ranges in claims 5 and 7 has been deleted and represented in new claims.

The term “serration” has been changed to “flute” in claim 12. Similar amendments were made throughout the specification. The French term “strie” was mistranslated as “serration.” We understand that in the field of automotive headlamps, the accurate term in English is “flute.”

New claim 14 recites, *inter alia*, “a central part disposed at least partially within the vertical plane defined by the optical axis, and first and second side parts, the side parts being disposed on opposing sides of the vertical plane, and wherein the protuberances are produced solely on these side parts.” Support for this amendment is found throughout the originally filed specification, including Figure 4. New claims 15-19 are based upon the originally filed claims. For example, claim 15 recites, *inter alia*, “wherein the protuberance has a thickness of between 0.2 millimeters and 2 millimeters.” This language was taken from originally filed claim 5. New claim 20 is an independent claim that describes a further embodiment of Applicants’ invention. It recites, *inter alia*, “a light source,” “a reflector,” “an exit lens” and “a shield,” as well as “a plurality of modified surface regions” on the exit lens. The modified surface regions are

“produced on at least one of the side parts of the exit surface of the lens” and are “to divert in a given direction a part of the light signals encountering this modified surface region.” Support for this claim is found throughout the originally filed specification, including Figures 4-5; pp. 6 and 11.

B. Formal Matters / Status of the Claims

At the outset, several matters of form were raised by the Office Action. The drawings were objected to and two alleged deficiencies were identified. Figures 1 and 2 allegedly omitted the legend “Prior Art.” (10/01/04 Office Action at ¶3). Submitted herewith is a substitute sheet of drawings including this legend. Also, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR § 1.83(a) for the alleged failure to a protuberance on the exit surface of the lens. (10/01/04 Office Action at ¶4). Respectfully, Applicants suggest that this feature is shown in the originally filed figures. For example, Figures 4 and 5 show these protuberances as reference numeral (400). Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Two formal matters were raised with the claims. Claim 1 was objected to because of the use of the phrase “the said.” (10/01/04 Office Action at ¶2). By this paper, this phrase was deleted from claim 1, and replace with “the.” Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested. Also, claims 1 and 3 also were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite because of the term “arrangements.” Respectfully, this rejection is moot as the claims have been amended to avoid the tem “arrangements” and now recite “protuberance.” This language was taken from previously pending claim 4, which has now been cancelled to avoid redundancy. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

As to the merits, claims 1-4 and 9-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,796,171 to Lindae et al.

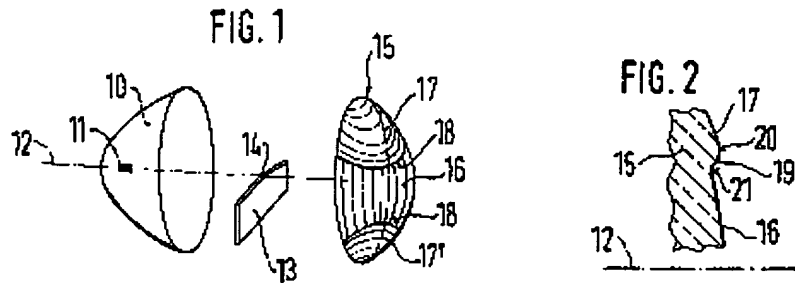
("Lindae") or U.S. Patent No. 6,416,210 to Uchida ("Uchida"), respectively. Claims 5-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lindae or Uchida.

C. Claims 1-20 Are Patentably Distinct From Lindae Or Uchida

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 1-13 as allegedly being anticipated by, or unpatentable over Lindae or Uchida. As explained below, these references fail to disclose all of the claim elements as required for such rejections. Specifically, Applicants' claim 1 recites:

1. A projection device for a motor vehicle, comprising
a reflector,
a light source producing a set of light signals which can be reflected by the reflector,
an exit lens, comprising an entry surface and an exit surface, for producing a light beam, and
a shield disposed between the reflector and the exit lens in order to produce a cutoff in the light beam produced,
wherein the exit lens comprises a set of protuberances produced in at least one side part of the exit surface of the lens, each arrangement being able to divert in a given direction a part of the light signals encountering this protuberance, the protuberances being produced on the side parts of the exit surface of the exit lens.

Lindae is directed to a low beam or fog headlamp for motor vehicle. Lindae's goal is to get non-sharpness of the cut off line, which he calls a "boundary line." Col. 1, ln. 64; Col. 4, lns. 18-22. The surface of Lindae's lens is eroded to create diffusion zones, which attenuate the sharpness of the cut off line by diffusing light with various angles. Col. 4, lns. 10-44; *see also* Lindae's claim 3. Diffusion means that light is projected according to a vast angle amplitude, without preferential direction. Lindae's Figures 1 and 2 (reproduced below) illustrate the arrangement of his rounded edge (20):

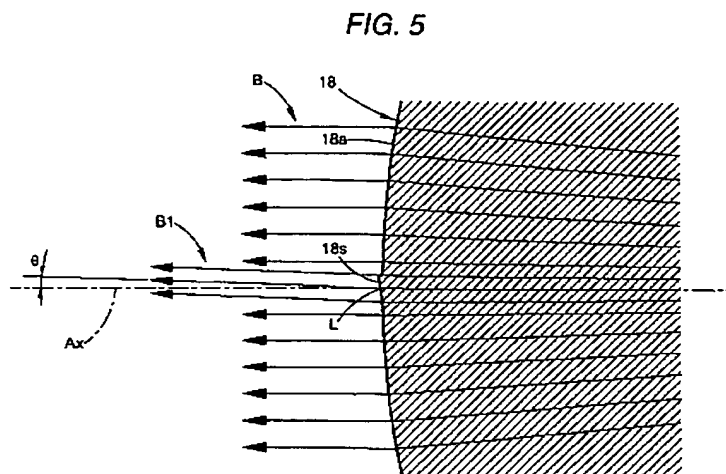


As shown above, the rounded edge (20) is a boundary between an intermediate aspheric partial surface (16) and upper and lower aspheric partial surfaces (17, 17'). This rounded edge would result diffuse the light at the vicinity of the cut off line, projecting it according to a vast angle amplitude. These rounded edges (20) run through the vertical plane defined by the optical axis, as do all of Lindae's other "arrangements." See Figure 4 (concave lenses [38] and convex lenses [39]); Figure 5 (upright linear profiles [47]), Figure 6 (microelements [58]). Nothing in Lindae suggests that these features should be excluded from a central portion of the lens.

Accordingly, Lindae fails to teach, disclose or suggest "a set of protuberances produced in at least one side part of the exit surface of the lens, each arrangement being able to divert in a given direction a part of the light signals encountering this protuberance, the protuberances being produced on the side parts of the exit surface of the exit lens" as recited in Applicants' claim 1.

Uchida is directed to a headlamp for a vehicle having a light source (12), a light shielding plate (22) and a focusing lens (18). See Figure 3. In Uchida's first embodiment, a lens element (18s) is formed by an upwardly deflecting prism lens element which is formed in such a manner as to vertically straddle the line of intersection. Col. 4, lns. 30-33; Figure 4. Uchida's lens element (18s) "extends in the horizontal direction along a line of intersection L. Figure 3;

Col. 4, lns. 27-30. Lens elements (18s) are concentrated on the central part of the lens, on a horizontal strip situated at mid height of the lengths. Uchida's Figure 5 illustrates this point:



Figures 7 and 9 show magnified images of this horizontal strip. In Figure 7, lens element (18s) is formed to extend in the horizontal direction along the line of intersection L between the front-side surface 18a and the horizontal plane including the optical axis Ax. Col. 6, lns. 48-51. Lens elements 18s1 and 18s2 also are formed extending in the horizontal direction adjacently on the upper and lower sides of the lens element 18s. Col. 6, lns. 51-54. The lens element 18s is an upwardly deflecting prism lens element. Likewise, the Figure 9 embodiment is based upon Figure 3, except that “the lens elements 18s and 18s1 are formed as convex cylindrical lens elements.” Col. 8, lns. 5-13. In short, nothing in Uchida suggests that these features should be excluded from a central portion of the lens.

Accordingly, Uchida also fails to teach, disclose or suggest “a set of protuberances produced in at least one side part of the exit surface of the lens, each arrangement being able to divert in a given direction a part of the light signals encountering this protuberance,

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the protuberances being produced on the side parts of the exit surface of the exit lens" as recited in Applicants' claim 1.

For at least similar reasons, independent claim 20 ("a plurality of modified surface regions ... being produced on at least one of the side parts of the exit surface of the lens") and dependent claims 2-3, 5-19 also are respectfully asserted to be patentably distinct from the cited references.

CONCLUSION

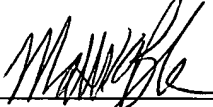
For the above-stated reasons, this application is respectfully asserted to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable examination on the merits is requested. In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate the examination of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

THE COMMISSIONER IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE ANY ADDITIONAL FEES WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED FOR THE TIMELY CONSIDERATION OF THIS AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 AND 1.17, OR CREDIT ANY OVERPAYMENT TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 13-4500, ORDER NO. 1948-4808.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: January 25, 2005

By: _____


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